1: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945) 1949 ND12 Nahane ND12

sarily bringing about the end of life. Thus dreaming represents a condition in which the soul temporarily leaves the body and "walks around." At this time it may "find out something—what you're gonna do." Should the soul travel too far from its proper locus, the life of the sleeping person may be endangered. Old Man reported that he awoke one night to find his second wife hardly breathing. He chafed her wrists and rolled her body. "Finally wind come out." He asserted that her soul had traveled too far from the body which, as a result, was close to lifelessness. Old Kean referred to the mobility of the soul when he declared: "My tajuš know lots of things. Just like man it go anyplace."

Following the final and permanent alienation of the body and wind, the spirit is believed to linger around the place of death for an indefinite period of time, generally from three days to a week. During this interim period the spirit is regarded as malevolent, being particularly dangerous for children below the age of puberty and to those relatives who have offended the deceased in life.[19] Even a child's spirit presents such danger to living children and especially to surviving siblings. The intent of the spirit is to secure a child to accompany it in the afterworld, while toward relatives who have injured it, the spirit seeks vengeance. Four days following Old Metla's death, Old Man commented on the two fires that had recently broken out, one in Hans Donnelly's line camp and the other in Hans' wife's tent. Although empirical explanations for both accidents were readily advanced and discussed, Old Man thought that Old Metla's spirit was also at work. "This old woman suffer. Nobody cut wood for her. Hans never cut wood for her; nobody come around. . . . Used to be old people believed it." It was pointed out that Hans' tent had burned eleven hours before death occurred. Old Man agreed but added: "Old woman just about all in that morning."

During the period shortly after death, a spirit may also communicate to people through the crackling of burning wood. When this phenomenon is heard, a small piece of bacon or other food is thrown into the stove as an offering to the spirit. Old Man revealed that Lady Suzu had been seen to respond to such a signal, while her mother's unburied body remained in camp, by throwing a bit of food into the stove. Following the period of sojourn (or, according to one informant, immediately after death) the spirit travels to the afterworld.

Occasionally spirits return from the afterlife and manifest themselves in human sounds and activities. Sometimes they are also seen in human guise although, lacking tangible existence, they cannot be felt. Fear of ghosts is not an intense or prevalent characteristic of the Kaska. One experience of this kind was noted. Ten days after Old Metla's death, Old Man reported that he, his wife, Lady Suzu, and Paulette Connelly were awakened by the sound of footsteps in the snow outside the cabin. A moment later they heard the sound of ripping canvas. Old Man expressed fear that one of the dogs had gotten loose and was breaking into the adjoining tent, where the old woman had died. Paulette arose and lit a candle. As soon as the light appeared, all sounds ceased. Paulette left the house but could find no tracks in the snow. Upon checking the dog shelters, she found all the animals in place. The next morning Old Man looked around, but also failed to locate any tracks. We asked Old Man his opinion of the phenomenon. "I figger maybe ghost come back," he said. "That woman suffer too much."

[19] Compare Opler, *An Interpretation of Ambivalence of Two American Indian Tribes* (1936); Opler, *Further Comparative Anthropological Data Bearing on the Solution of a Psychological Problem* (1936); also Honigmann, *Northern and Southern Athapaskan Eschatology* (1951), 169.

1: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945) 1949 ND12 Nahane ND12

cent animals' flesh. Some fathers warn their sons not to eat moose marrow, the explanation being that marrow will destroy the boy's endurance and thus limit his moose hunting ability. A number of families avoid feeding their dogs the meat of trapped animals explaining: "If you do, never catch anything next time." Considerable respect is shown to the bear. Coming across a bear, River Joe once refused to kill the animal, vaguely explaining his behavior by saying that the meat was not good to eat. On another occasion the ethnographer's four year old son several times threw a bear paw into a brush fire. Each time Donald Suza pulled it out and finally threw the part into the river. He would not reveal his objection to burning the paw. In discussing the incident Old Man explained that the Frances Lake Indians continue to regard "many things" as "bad business" and added that Lady Suza will not eat bear meat. 784

The only religious rites and ceremonies in which the Kaska participate are those officiated by Catholic missionaries. Such ceremonies include baptism, prayer, Mass, confession, and communion. During the summer, nightly devotions in Lower Post bring many people together to recite one or two decades of the rosary. The prayers are said in English, although a few people also know them in Kaska. Apart from such occasions, prayer is limited. River Joe said that during his wife's illness he had prayed for her improvement. The woman died and Joe is reported to have expressed resentment that his prayers were not answered. During the summer, Mass is celebrated every morning but in winter it is limited to Sundays. How well the symbolism and liturgy of the rite are understood could not be learned. When attending church services the sexes generally separate, men sitting on the left side of the building and women on the right. 786 787 [788] [782]

Many people go to confession about once a year to confess such sins as drinking, swearing, and sexual offenses. The confession, according to Old Man, is prompted by the priest asking questions like: "Did you swear?" and then requesting the number of times that the offense was committed. Following confession the people may receive communion. 783

Christmas is the most important ceremonial holiday. In the winter settlements its celebration is sometimes begun on Christmas eve, when a brew is drunk; drinking may continue for several days. If the people are in the trading post, Mass is attended Christmas morning and, sometimes, an afternoon church party is given for children. In the summer of 1941, a religious ceremony occurred in connection with the consecration of the new church in Lower Post. The rite was performed by the bishop of the diocese and was witnessed by all the Indians then in the community. On the following morning a solemn high Mass was celebrated by the bishop assisted by two missionaries. Both ceremonies were marked by considerable glamor and quite appreciated by the Indians. 527 177 796

Attitudes of the people toward the priests vary, but in general are marked by respect and some tendency to ingratiation. In the case of many people one of the reasons for attending religious rites is a desire not to expose themselves to the direct attention of the missionaries. The priests, who are young men, try to be friendly and democratic and appear to be sincerely interested in the Indians' temporal and spiritual welfare. Any direct interference of the missionaries in the life of the people is resented and may lead to an informal boycott of the church and school. Old Man stated that once when a missionary reported him to the police for drunkenness, he remained away from church until the priest suitably 797

At repeated (often frequent) intervals during the first to fourth year of a child's life the father prayed over his child. With his hand he stroked its naked body, then holding his hand palm up, towards the Day Dawn, he blew along it as if blowing something off the palm. At the same time he prayed aloud (to the Day Dawn) saying, if the child was a boy, "May my child be strong and healthy", "May sickness always pass him by", "May he be a good hunter", "May he be wealthy" etc., and if a girl, "May she be good at work","May she be good at making embroidery" etc. He prayed for whatever he desired for the child in the way of health and accomplishments, etc. 782 954

PUBERTY OF GIRLS

The attainment of puberty was considered the most critical and important period in a girl's life. What she did at this period would effect her future life and ensure her good luck or the reverse. She therefore at this time had to undergo a period of careful training to make her lucky and fit her to become a useful woman and esteemed member of the tribe. 881 [777]

Pubescence was considered a "great mystery". At this first budding out of womanhood girls were believed to be endowed with certain supernatural powers over persons and things the misuse of which might do very great harm both to themselves and people in general.

765 775 for the purpose and, if she consented, the string was tied to her. Women sometimes desired that adult relatives who died should be reborn by them. Thus a married sister or other relative would desire to have a brother or a sister reborn by them. Strings were tied to them in the same way.

764 When a person was burned there were always some goods burned with him. If a man, he had some clothes, moccasins, kettles, weapons and food burned with him. It is believed that all these things were required by a man to use when travelling on the trail to the spirit land.

567 782 764 If the deceased was a wealthy man and possessed slaves one or more slaves were killed at his death. Their bodies were not burned but thrown away some distance or more often thrown in the river or in water. If the deceased had been a kind man and fond of his slaves he told the people before his death "Do not kill any of my slaves", and none were killed. They became the slaves of his heir.

If the man had been fond of his slaves and he thought they would not be treated very well by his heir, he requested that they should be liberated at his death, which was done.

764 782 No dogs were killed when their masters died, and there was no custom of relatives of a deceased

person killing someone, such as an enemy, or undertaking a war expedition to appease their sorrow for the death of their relative. 764 782

Songs, it seems, chiefly mourning songs or death chants, were sung at the pyre, where the body was consumed slowly. In singing these songs the people swayed their bodies from side to side in peculiar motions. 764 533

The people who prepared the corpse, carried it, constructed the pyre and did all the work in connection with the corpse and its cremation were always of the opposite phratry of the deceased and all were elderly. Young people never did this work and seldom any below forty years of age. 764

No restrictions were put on these people in the way of eating and purification, etc. All they had to do was afterwards to wash their hands and faces. They /were/ not required to purge themselves by drinking medicine nor by pushing twigs down their throats to induce vomiting. This latter custom was unknown or at least never followed by the Tahltan in any ceremonies, such as those connected with death, puberty, etc. 764 783

After the funeral fire had burned out, the charred bones of the deceased were collected and wrapped in skin. They were then placed on the top of a small crib of logs built up a few feet from the ground 764